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of

The Theosophical Society

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The Presidential Address of Annie Besant, D.L., P. T. S.
to the Forty-ninth Annual Convention

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THE THEOSOPHICAL PRESS
Wheaton, Illinois

FOREWORD

I AM issuing this speech separately because I believe that many will be glad to have such a record of a year's work of a Society, which is steadily becoming a greater influence for good all over the civilised world, and is more and more recognised as a Servant of Humanity, wherever service is needed.

ANNIE BESANT, P.T.S.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

THE FORTY-NINTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

BRETHREN:

With pleasure I accepted the invitation of the Bombay Lodges that this Forty-ninth Anniversary of the Theosophical Society should take place in their great City, the Gateway of India. Last year we met at Kāshi, Benares, the ancient seat of Hinḍū Learning, the intellectual Metropolis of Bhāraṭavarsha; our next year's meeting is that of the Jubilee of our beloved Society, and it is fitting that it should take place in the International Headquarters, at Adyar, the Home of our outer Founders, H. P. Blavatsky and H. S. Olcott, and, as the centre of action of our Founders in the higher world, receiving ever Their Benediction, since there is the centre of the Society which radiates over the world of men that spiritual influence which renews the life of our earth.

Let us, then, renew our yearly invocation to Those who are our Guides, leading us from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to Light, from death to Immortality.

May Those, who are the embodiment of Love Immortal, bless with Their Protection the Society established to do Their Will on earth; may They ever guard it by Their Power, inspire it by Their Wisdom, and energise it by Their Activity.

The General Work of the Society

Last year, I said, under this heading that the storms which had left traces in 1923 had exhausted themselves, and that "the Great Hope of the Coming of the World's Helper grows brighter and brighter". This year, 1924, has been one of peaceful and successful activity and of useful achievements, as we shall see in a moment. But I must, before dealing with these, mention one or two matters, causing a passing sense of loss in the physical world, though we know that of real loss there can be none.

Let us pause for a moment to remember, and gratefully to show our reverence and affection to, one of the oldest and most faithful servants of the Masters and of Their Society. Dr. Subramaniam joined in the very early days of the Society, and he never wavered in his courage, his faith and his devotion. He defended our H. P. B. against the wicked attacks made on her through the Coulombs, and his clear legal mind and acute brain pierced through the pitiful evidence brought against her, and scattered it to the winds. He stood like a rock through all storms, and his loving devotion to his Master was the strength of his heroic life. He is with the One he served so faithfully, and with him all is well. Another strong man has passed away in England, Colonel Lauder, who literally worked himself to death during the War, and broke down completely when the strain ceased; he gave his life for his country, after he had for long years dedicated it to the Society, and been one of its pillars in England. Equally well known in England and India, and again one of the oldest of our members, Miss Francesca Arundale passed peacefully away at Adyar, but her services to the Society in both countries, and the self-sacrificing work she rendered here to the education of Indian Girls will long keep her memory green among us. Another serious loss of a good worker befell our Society here in India in the passing of Bro. H. K. Patwardhan of Ahmednagar, but a fortnight ago; he will be greatly missed at this Convention, which he had anticipated with much pleasure.

In Australia, our loved Brother, Bishop Leadbeater, has been in danger from a sharp attack of rheumatism, which not only caused great pain, but also for the time rendered his arms useless. He is recovering slowly. We are all hoping that he will be able to be with us next

year for our Jubilee Convention, for none among us has done more to render that joyous event worthy of commemoration than he.

We have to congratulate Dr. Mary Rocke for the splendid success of her daring conception, the building of a Greek open-air amphitheatre in Sydney, Australia, on the shore of that famous harbour, and it is a dream of beauty. Unstinted admiration has been poured out on it in the Sydney press, and, judging by the pictures we have received, it is indeed beautiful. She has toiled for it in the hope that one day the Coming Teacher may use it; it is an offering laid at His Feet. Another great piece of construction is the "Adyar Building" on a fine site in Sydney, erected by the Blavatsky Lodge, and its hall is said to be the prettiest in Sydney.

Sydney is to be a great Theosophical centre in the future, and they have made a good beginning, for neither of the two great works was begun when I was there in 1922.

Our International Lecturers

It is difficult to over-estimate the valuable services rendered by our International Lecturers, who travel far and wide, distributing the bread of life. Among these I may name the Vice-President and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Wood, Dr. and Mrs. Arundale, Mr. Knudsen. Miss Clara Codd and Miss Selene Oppenheimer have worked in Australia and New Zealand.

Mr. Fritz Kunz has worked incessantly, not only in lecturing but in helping the business side of Sydney activities.

Revised List of Charters issued up to the end of 1924

1878	1	1894	386	1910	1,200
1879	2	1895	401	1911	1,282
1880	11	1896	425	1912	1,358
1881	19	1897	487	1913	1,441
1882	46	1898	526	1914	1,520
1883	89	1899	558	1915	1,554
1884	99	1900	595	1916	1,618
1885	118	1901	647	1917	1,674
1886	131	1902	704	1918	1,724
1887	156	1903	751	1919	1,822
1888	169	1904	800	1920	1,923
1889	199	1905	864	1921	2,033
1890	235	1906	913	1922	2,133
1891	271	1907	958	1923	2,221
1892	300	1908	1,041	1924	2,331
1893	344	1909	1,116		

Lodges and Members

No.	National Societies	No. of Lodges	Active Members	New Members added during the year	Remarks
1	T.S. in The United States ...	250	6,916	1,211	
2	„ England	151	4,821	519	
3	„ India	363	5,358	427	
3a	„ Federation of Young Theosophists	47	1,000	825	
4	„ Australia	24	1,580	123	
5	„ Sweden	42	1,076	65	Report recd., late.
6	„ New Zealand ...	18	1,227	88	
7	„ The Netherlands ...	37	2,531	228	
8	„ France	68	2,740	362	
9	„ Italy	31	613	124	
10	„ Germany	32	792	201	
11	„ Cuba	43	916	172	
12	„ Hungary	10	413	8	
13	„ Finland	22	610	89	
14	„ Russia	12	392	27	
15	„ Czecho-Slovakia ...	7	1,129	...	No report.
16	„ South Africa	12	430	53	
17	„ Scotland	30	804	79	
18	„ Switzerland	17	232	13	
19	„ Belgium	10	310	72	
20	„ Dutch East Indies ...	28	1,774	166	
21	„ Burma	10	211	20	
22	„ Austria	12	505	85	
23	„ Norway	14	302	20	
24	„ Egypt	8	113	25	
25	„ Denmark	9	363	36	
26	„ Ireland	7	116	14	No report
27	„ Mexico	25	440	...	No report
28	„ Canada	24	627	76	
29	„ Argentina	18	550	140	
30	„ Chile	10	191	24	
31	„ Brazil	20	348	88	
32	„ Bulgaria	13	200	45	
33	„ Iceland	8	285	25	
34	„ Spain	14	559	117	
35	„ Portugal	11	237	41	
36	„ Wales	14	293	19	
37	„ Poland	8	177	28	
38	„ Uruguay	10	...	...	
	Non-Sectionalised Countries ...	31	711	204	
	Grand Total ...	1,540	41,492	5,859	

Only three countries have sent no report; the figures of the last report are given.

Our National Societies

Let us look at our National Societies, 38 in number :

United States. The T.S. in the U.S.A. reports that its "most important fact this year is the spirit of intense activity. Everywhere the Lodges are unusually alert and our lecturers are speaking to larger audiences than in any previous year. More new Lodges were organised last year than in any preceding one and the prospects are excellent for still greater success in new territory." Its very useful new enterprise, the Theosophical Correspondence School has evidently met a real demand, and has had the largest degree of success. "Aside from the better education of the members through systematic study under the direction of skilled educators, it has been especially useful to new Lodges and has also served a number of non-members." An Intermediate Course has been added to the Elementary Course for the coming year.

The Lotus and Round Table work is flourishing under the careful direction of Mrs. Vida Stone, who has established many Centres during the year. This activity is particularly useful in reaching the children of non-members. Some Tables have been established in churches, in public schools and in State institutions of various kinds, and of course at least some little knowledge of Theosophy inevitably reaches such groups.

The States have been fortunate in the visits of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Wood, and of the Vice-President and Mrs. C. Jinarājadāsa. All four of these fine workers have given lectures, and have been welcomed by large audiences.

England has been well served by visitors this year: The President, the Vice-President and his wife, Dr. and Mrs. Arundale, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Wood were among those who paid long or short visits. A Special Convention was held of which a very full report is given. It showed very marked sympathy with the methods and policy of the officials. The Annual Convention was remarkable as having representatives present from 28 National Societies, of whom 15 were General Secretaries. Miss Codd has returned home from Australia, and Mrs. Ransom has gone thither and has been elected as General Secretary. The much-loved General Secretary of the T.S. in England, Major Graham Pole, resigned partly from ill-health and partly from the pressure of other duties, and his place has been filled by Mr. Gardner, who is much liked and trusted. Many books were sold at the Theosophical Kiosk at Wembley, and 100,000 leaflets on Theosophy were given away.

India. The T.S. in India has suffered from the uneasy political conditions, and the intense interest felt in political questions, which absorb public attention. On the other hand, we have the movement of Young Theosophists, and the report says that the chief event during the year " has been the great impulse given to the Theosophical movement in India by larger facilities being offered to the Youth to join the Theosophical Society. Dr. Arundale by his remarkable influence over Indian Youth has called forth an enthusiastic response from young men wherever he has gone and addressed their meetings. Our thanks are due to Dr. Arundale for the great work he is doing in this direction. Our workers have sent us very good reports of the working of these Youth Lodges, and there is hardly a town of note that has not at least one Youth Lodge in it. It will be these members that will spread the knowledge of Theosophy in the years to come and will be the mainstay of our work ". Their Lodges and members are not borne on the rolls of the Society, as they should be; I am adding them to the Indian total, though not to the Section itself.

The General Secretary speaks well of the T.S. Muslim League, which he thinks has a great work before it.

Australia. The General Secretary, Dr. Bean, retired, and his place was filled by Mrs. Sidney Ransom. She writes in her report that the Section " had the great privilege and pleasure of the presence of the Vice-President of the T.S. at Convention in Melbourne in April last. His friendly, gentle presence greatly helped in solving difficult problems in a spirit of co-operation and sacrifice. He had already lectured in Perth and Adelaide, and after the Convention, came on to Sydney, where he gave a series of noonday addresses in the Town Hall vestibule to crowded audiences. His Sunday evening addresses were equally crowded by very attentive audiences, eager to hear his message, so beautifully delivered ".

Mr. Fritz Kunz has been the main lecturer in Sydney for the Sunday evening public lectures. He has a gift for attracting the " business man," and " presents to him a practical application of Theosophic principles in a kindly humorous style ".

Dr. J. J. van der Leeuw and Capt. Ransom (at the present moment lecturing in Melbourne) have also done much good work for the Sunday lectures. Mr. Ernest Wood is in Australia and will be able to travel round the Section before he leaves.

The Youth Movement is getting a firm grip. The movement in the T.S. itself is directed by Miss Dora van Gelder, and has great promise in it, and will produce capable lecturers. The sister movement engineered by young members in Melbourne, and known as The Australasian League of Youth, hopes to serve the Masters by bringing youths together on a wide and unlabelled platform. They have their own magazine called *Youth*.

There is no report from *Sweden*, though from visitors I hear of much activity and good work. (It came too late for inclusion here.)

New Zealand is proud of its new Headquarters, "its beauty and simplicity, its artistic colouring and joyous atmosphere". Six Lodges own their premises, a very good sign. At the Convention, the Opening Address was given by Miss Clara Codd, National Lecturer of the English Section, who was visiting the Dominion. "She said that she always attended Conventions when possible, and recommended the members to make a practice of doing so, reminding them of the words from our Scriptures saying 'Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together'. When we come together we catch fire from one another, and each one of us draws according to his capacity an increasing fullness of life and inspiration, and in the inner world a beautiful light and colour flows into the city and spreads that particular inspiration which radiates from the Society."

Miss Oppenheimer is mentioned as having done splendid work in visiting the Lodges, and other visitors are recorded. The Vice-President and Mrs. Jinarājadāsa passed through Wellington on their way to America; Dr. Mary Rocke, Bishop Irving S. Cooper and Dr. van der Leeuw also had a day or two there while journeying to Australia and America. Just recently, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Wood have also visited Wellington *en route* to Australia. They all held meetings both private and public, much to the delight of the members who were able to gather there for the occasion.

The Netherlands, says Miss Dijkraaf, look back on a fruitful year of steady growth and harmonious development. "The increase of membership was larger than last year, and altogether there is a growing interest in Theosophy, showing itself in a favourable attitude of the press, the Churches, well attended lectures and a good sale of books."

"Wanting to help in the general difficulties of life of brothers in Central Europe, several Lodges in this Section adopted each a German

Lodge, and this has done much to establish a warm personal feeling of nearness and brotherhood between the two countries."

France writes cheerfully of the growing interest. "The elementary course of Theosophy, by Mlle. Aimée Blech, was sedulously attended by enraptured audiences, and provided an excellent recruiting ground of new members. Mr. G. Chevrier's evening classes on *The Secret Doctrine* have shown how fascinating the study of H.P.B.'s writings can be made by a specially gifted lecturer. The second year's course, by Mlle. V. Reynaud, was most masterly, and brought home the truth 'that there are also in Theosophy teachings deep enough to cause even a giant to swim'."

In the Provinces, Theosophical work has been well sustained through the year. A valuable asset was the visit made to many French Lodges by Mr. and Mrs. Muirson Blake, who delivered in the principal towns scores of lectures in French and in English.

A new venture which met with considerable success in Paris is the "Théâtre Esotérique". "It was started by one of our members, Mr. Paul Castan, with the object of bringing to the notice of the public plays of a spiritual or occult character. Accordingly, every month a performance comprising one or several plays is given in the main Lecture Hall of the Headquarters, which can fairly well serve the purpose of a theatre. Ten such performances have been given up to now, all of which have drawn numerous and appreciative audiences, and have been extensively reported upon by the daily newspapers.

"So much for the Theosophical side of activities. The cause of Brotherhood has also been served. A League for Promoting Good Will between France and Germany was established last year during the Vienna Congress by a devoted member, Mr. J. Demarquette. It has hitherto been the means of bringing together French and German Theosophists in a common endeavour, and will—let us hope so—help to build a channel whereby the Peace from above shall be able to come down into the world of men."

Italy was much thrown back by the War, but is now showing signs of revival in active work. Colonel Boggiani, the faithful General Secretary, writes that the outstanding feature of the year 1924 has been this revival. He gives the following interesting note on Italian characteristics :

"It is necessary never to forget that Italians generally are not in the habit of joining societies or clubs of any kind; they very much prefer to stand aside, even when very soundly interested in the various matters. Moreover they have more in view the spreading of the ideals than increasing the number of members on the rolls, and consider T.S. membership very much as the enrolment in an army of workers and of servers; and therefore when somebody, after having attended a few lectures or an open meeting, asks for application, it is generally suggested to him to wait, to attend more lectures and meetings and study, till he feels quite sure, he is in harmony with the Theosophical doctrine and its Ideals. So it happens that membership is not so numerous as perhaps it could otherwise be; but on the other hand, when talking to outside people, very frequently one finds that many of them are deeply interested in Theosophy. This is the most important thing; and it is so much so, that the orthodox Roman clergy feels now very uneasy, and gratifies us with angry attacks and special sermons full of false statements. Such attacks, however, virulent as they have been, have had no result but that of evermore increasing the general interest; and so we can feel very grateful to our generous, though unwilling, co-operators. Another sign of the increase in the interest for Theosophy and things spiritual in this country has been very clearly prominent in the Philosophical Congress held last spring in Napoli, where not a small number of lectures, papers and speeches by the Congressists were marked with a true Theosophical spirit.

"The 'Young Theosophists' movement, which was started in Italy, has met a considerable success; there are already Branches in Torino, Milano, Trieste, Bologna, Roma and Bari. They are still in a period of organisation and of research, but their working is very promising. In Roma through the care of these Young Theosophists will shortly be edited a fortnightly paper, *Alcyone*, which, though not openly stamped with a Theosophical mark, aims at the spreading of Theosophical Ideals among the Italian youth, so that, if living, it will assuredly perform a very useful work.

"Side by side with this Y. T. movement which is a part of the European Federation, another important activity has had its beginning this year, the 'Order of the Goliardi Theosophists,' promoted by some young members of ours who are students in the Pisa University, where they formed a special Branch 'Isis,' which has been fully admitted to

the rights and privileges of every Goliardic association; so this Branch with our Theosophical emblem was officially inscribed in the University Register, and soon attracted the most benevolent attention of all teachers and students. A second Branch is in process of being formed in the Firenze Athenæum, and they hope to have others in other Italian Universities."

The Italian Section of the "Karma and Reincarnation Legion" is going on steadily in its useful work of the popular spreading of these two fundamental tenets of Theosophy. The Section has now a monthly magazine of its own, *Rincarnazione*, which has met with the most sympathetic public favour.

"Another new departure is the starting of a Vegetarian Restaurant by two members of the T.S. in Turin, and they hope it will prove to be a real centre of preparation, guiding the general public to a materially and morally more hygienic system of life, and contributing in this manner to make them ready for the impending Coming of the Great Teacher, and for the new Way that has to be trodden by Humanity in the future."

Germany sends a long and interesting report, showing 199 new members, and 4 new Lodges. Here again we meet our Young Theosophists. They have formed two Groups at Berlin, one at Hamburg, at Essen, at Ruhr, at Dinslaken, at Iserlohn, at Elbing (Ostpreussen). "They are bringing quite a new spirit into the body of our Section, a spirit of enthusiasm, joy, enterprise and strong will of co-operation. They are in touch with representatives of other German Youth Organisations, and this mutual interest is opening splendid vistas for our work in the future. On May 15th a Youth Festival took place at Berlin, where members of the Youth Groups and the Round Table gave a performance of Gertrud Prelliritz's *Heiteres Marchenspiel*, for the benefit of poor children."

The Vice-President collected during his stay in England £20 for the Propaganda Fund; Birmingham and America also helped. Members from Australia and South Africa sent whole volumes of *The Theosophist* and *The Herald of the Star*, which are circulating amongst our members. The European Federation of the T.S. has once more given the sum necessary to continue the Sectional Magazine.

The help given by the Order of Service to German F.T.S. and Star members in distress has been really marvellous. The Section thanks

Mr. Burgess, Mr. Thomson and Mme. Poushkine, who, with the help of F.T.S. all over the world, have constantly been sending money and clothing. They have enabled several Lodges to feed a large number of members during months. England and Norway have taken care of children. The American Section alone has collected more than $800 for the Relief Work of the Order of Service, and Mr. Burgess is intending to continue his selfless work, because utter misery and poverty are still spreading in this country and he has not yet been able to help all the members who are in distress. The General Secretary says: "May I take this opportunity to send once more in the name of all those whose suffering has been diminished, whose hope and confidence has been strengthened through the help received, the heartiest thanks to Mr. Burgess, to his noble co-workers and to all the F.T.S. who have supported the Relief Campaign of the Order of Service."

"It may seem strange that six years after the war people are still so dependent on financial help from other countries. The main reason is that the German Section has *not one rich member* since about eight years, whereas in other Sections there are always some members who are able and willing to cover the deficit in the budget of their Section. Work done for Theosophy in Germany is work done for humanity as a whole, as all the Nations are only different manifestations of the One Life."

Much work is being done for Internationalism, and the General Secretary says: "I am encouraging the international aspirations of our members as far as possible. In the beginning of October I shall attend the World Peace Congress at Berlin and represent there the International League for the Federation of Nations, being its Secretary for Germany."

Mr. Knudsen has continued his unceasing work in the Central Countries. Visits are noted from Professor Kulkarni, Dr. and Mrs. Arundale, and others. These have done much to inspire in the sorely stricken Germany courage and hope, and they feel that they are welcome everywhere in the Theosophical Brotherhood.

The T.S. in *Cuba* is one of the most active of our Societies, and formed seven Lodges during the year; two were dissolved. 10 Lodges are in Porto Rico, and the Cuban Mother is thinking that these might well form a National Society of their own.

Hungary has worked very steadily; the Round Table has been started in two Lodges, and the Hungarian Branch of the Federation of

Young Theosophists has been formed. The translation of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* is in the press. Some of you may remember that I mentioned in *The Theosophist* that the translation had been made and was held up for want of funds for printing it. That want was supplied.

Finland has had much lecturing activity during the year, and mentions gratefully the visit of Dr. and Mrs. Arundale. There are four Round Tables, all in Helsinki, and Dr. Sonck winds up:

"The Theosophical work has thus been performed perhaps a little more intensively and successfully than during the preceding years, bearing richer fruits in form of steadily increasing number of members and Lodges, and more and more changing opinion of the public in favour of our movement."

Russia must not lose her place in our list, the fourteenth, though her children are scattered about in many countries, being exiled from their own. I authorised their linking themselves up, and this has cheered them much, and they have a little Russian paper the *Vestmik* (Messenger). Mme. Anna Kamensky remains their General Secretary, with a roving commission.

[There is no report from *Czecho-Slovakia.*]

The T.S. in *South Africa* seems to be making a little way. It has received from Miss Knudsen a beautiful plot of ground and fine buildings, named "Adyar," to form which she has "slaved for years". It will be the Headquarters of the Section. To spread Brotherhood in S. Africa is an uphill task. It is practically meaningless in a country where it depends on the colour of the skin.

Scotland reports a year of steady work. The Sunday evening lectures in Glasgow aroused so much interest, that a study class of 70 persons was formed. The Headquarters Library has opened a department for Braille Theosophical Books for the Blind. Groups of Young Theosophists are being formed. The Edinburgh Lodges work steadily for the League of Nations Union, and have brought into it 200 members.

The *Swiss Section* has been very active during the year, and is recovering from the many difficulties of the years after the War. It has difficult work, with French, German and Italian Provinces, their inhabitants being of such different types. They are very active in the diffusion of vegetarianism and the protection of animals, and have opened in Geneva a Star shop, which forms a good centre of propaganda.

Belgium speaks of the number of Professors from the Universities and other well known men and women, who like to speak on the Theosophical platform. A lecture on the Intelligence of Animals, brought in 2,000 francs, which were distributed among Societies for the Protection of Animals.

In the *Netherlands-Indies*, steady growth is maintained, but the General Secretary asks that one of the leading members of the Society may find time for a visit to "this earnestly striving Section," and it really deserves such help, as it has every year recorded a growth in membership. A Branch of the T.S. Muslim League has been started and it should be very useful, as there are many Muslims in the country, who are descended from Hinḍūs and are often Sūfīs. The Theosophical Order of Service has many branches. The Young Theosophist Movement has started, and a Loan Society, well managed, has proved useful.

Burma has had a number of visitors this year, and the report speaks earnestly of the urgent need of an active Theosophical propaganda, that the new life which is pulsing through the country may flow in right channels.

Mr. John Cordes, *Austria*, writes, as ever, cheerily, though struggling with many difficulties; Austria has been so reduced in size and population, to say nothing of its poverty, that the T.S. has there a hard task. Mr. Cordes has, wisely, gone carefully over his register, and has cut out all members who are dormant. His list is therefore reduced to 505.

"The policy of consolidation brought in its train the hoped-for increase of inner strength. Formerly, members in this Section might have been fitly compared to bees swarming, whilst to-day they are truly quite like a bee-hive, so intensified have their ways of working become. A glance at the new edition of their *Schätze 1923* reveals over twenty different activities, all carried on in Vienna, chiefly at Headquarters, where every evening is taken up by well-attended Lodge and other meetings, whilst behind the scenes intense translation activities are carried on by a small but specially devoted set of workers, who translated into German Krishnaji's monthly messages to the Star Self-Preparation Groups, his new work *The Path*, *The Lives of Alcyone*, those of Orion, etc. Mr. Knudsen's liberality enabled these extra busy ones to flood us with Brotherhood Campaign leaflets also all in good German."

Norway has made no special progress, but speaks of the establishment of a group of Young Theosophists.

Egypt reports a quiet year of steady work, unmarked by any special features. She works on perseveringly under many difficulties, and shows a little progress under the devoted General Secretary, M. Perez.

The General Secretary, *Denmark*, remarks that "during this last year the conditions in Denmark altered in a way which has been very favourable to the spreading of Theosophy and to the Theosophical work in general. The public opinion, both as a whole and in literature and the press, has in many ways shown that the interest and the respect for the Theosophical attitude towards life has evolved to an astonishing degree. One sees, for instance, that the Theosophical way of regarding life is discussed in several of the books published by the greatest Publishing House of this country, and the leading papers are bringing articles before the public on Theosophical meetings as well as reports of them. One result is that the Society has engaged one of the finest and biggest halls in Copenhagen for a series of public lectures. All looks well for a great development."

There are no reports from *Ireland* and *Mexico*.

Canada is, at present, divided as to policy, some good workers standing by the General Secretary, others finding it impossible to work with him. With his consent, several Lodges have been attached to Adyar and these are forming a Federation.

There is much activity in *Argentina*, which mothers Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay; but the last named has fulfilled the hope expressed in the Argentina report, "that it is confidently expected that within a very short time, a Uruguayan Section will be formed". The application for a Charter has been received and granted. A very large number of lectures have been given, and with the help of a friendly press much propaganda has been carried on. The end of the report tells us that Señor A. Madril has been elected General Secretary and, as I have since been notified, Mrs. Gowland has been elected in the daughter Section.

Señor A. Zanelli, General Secretary of the T.S. in *Chile*, writes a very bright report, as he considers the "outlook for the future very promising". The *Revista* is much appreciated in the Spanish-speaking world, and a book containing translations of Mr. Ernest Wood's lectures

has been published, and is selling very well. Spanish-speaking America evidently means to come to the front.

There are 19 Lodges in *Brazil*, but one is "in lethargy". The General Secretary sends a full report of work; he notes that there is much collaboration between Theosophists and Spiritualists in Brazil, as many Theosophists have come through Spiritualism, and as they have much respect for Allan Kardec, most of the Brazilian Spiritualists are believers in re-incarnation.

Bulgaria is much disturbed politically, but it is noted that the discussions after the lectures shew interest in Theosophy.

One of our members in *Iceland*, Sig. Kristofer Peturssen, published during the year a book on the Spiritual Life in Iceland and a translation of the *Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā*; last winter he wrote a scientific book on the Icelandic language, and the MS. was read by some of the professors of the University; it was so much approved, that the University has given the money for its publication from a fund set apart for the publication of noteworthy scientific works. In the Introduction he states that he could not have written the book without his Theosophical knowledge.

Spain is making progress, slow but sure. A noteworthy fact is the donation by a Catholic priest of a large plot of land. *Sophia* has been revived, after a suspension of nine years.

Portugal shows an expansion of members, and claims that it has 40 members per million of inhabitants, a higher percentage than that of many other countries. It has started Leagues for the Protection of Animals and for Helping Orphans. An adventurous Theosophical aviator, Captain Manuel Sarmen Beires, left Lisbon last April for Macan, in China, and carried a message to me from Portuguese Theosophists, prefacing his long flight with a profession of his Theosophical beliefs, that was published in the Portuguese papers.

Wales sends a very full report of its many activities, among which we are glad to see the work for the League of Nations Union. The steady work of the groups is planned for strengthening the organisation, so as to carry the message of Theosophy all over the land.

Poland has this bright beginning:

"This year of work in the T.S. in Poland was a most successful one. It has grown in strength and unity. The Section has built up the consolidation of the collective organism, and has fully realised the spirit

of the Section, which is, the Spirit of Youth—real, live and active brotherhood, joy and enthusiasm—and has widened outer activities."

It has an Action Lodge, which is collecting all the evidence available on the Jewish problem, so as to discuss it fully and if possible arrive at a conclusion. The General Secretary says:

"Not only many of the members are working in various social, religious and political movements, but several societies are coming themselves to us to ask help and co-operation, because they feel the strength and readiness for impersonal work and service. A great part of the members is training itself to become workers and 'living examples' of the standard of the New Era. In this fact lies the strength of the Society."

We have no figures yet from *Uruguay.*

Unsectionalised

Rumania is not yet sectionalised, but hopes to fulfil the necessary conditions by next year. The report is interesting, showing the difficulties with which our brethren in those unsettled regions of Europe have to contend.

Jugoslavia also is unsectionalised and has but two chartered Lodges, but it has a very energetic and devoted Secretary in Miss Jelisava Vavra, who is the Presidential Agent there, and we expect good news.

T.S. Outposts in the Wilderness

Sokaren, Finland, and *Den Danske Loge* (Denmark), remain separate organisations, for no very clear reasons.

Shanghai and *Hongkong* are really in the wilderness, but are in the full current of Theosophical life. Shanghai is doing well, led by that earnest and devoted worker, Miss Dorothy Arnold, who hopes to be able to leave it and start a centre in Peking. It has published its first book in Chinese, not as I had hoped, *At the Feet of the Master,* for the translation turned out to be unsatisfactory, and it is being redone. Miss Lily Noblston is the Hon. Secretary. Its activities are most creditable.

The Hongkong Lodge is also doing most admirable work.

There has come no report from *Hankow* or *Barbadoes.*

The World Federation of Young Theosophists

A report has reached me of this Federation, but I have had no direct information about its formation. In India, we have a Federation of Youth Lodges, of which the members are members of the T.S. but apparently it is not so in other countries. Details will doubtless come to hand later. Details apart, it is an admirable movement, and has my warmest sympathy.

The T.S. Muslim League

The T.S. Muslim League in India has a useful record of service since its inception last year, largely due to the work of Bro. H. C. Kumar, who has lectured on the teachings of Islām to both Hinḍūs and Muslims in many parts of India.

Headquarters Activities

Our T.S. Headquarters have become a centre of many activities which affect our neighbourhood and the larger world outside. The Treasurer's Report is very satisfactory, and again shows how well the Gardens are flourishing under the skilful care of Mr. Jussawalla. There is no change in our old and faithful workers: Messrs. Schwarz, J. R. Aria, Ranga Reddi, A. K. Sitarama Shastri, helped by Mr. C. Subbarayadu—under whose care the Vasanṭā Press is one of the best in India—and Rao Sāheb Soobhiah Chetty, H. P. B.'s old friend; Mrs. Stead, Miss Ware and Miss Whittam look after the Blavatsky Gardens, Leadbeater Chambers and Headquarters; Mrs. Cannan, Miss McCulloch work in the Editorial Office; Mr. Ramachandra Rao, Corresponding Secretary, assisted by Mr. Raghavachari, Miss Willson and Mr. C. Ramayya in the E.S. Central Office; Miss Ridge and Mrs. Dinshaw in the T.P.H.; Mr. Shah caters for Leadbeater Chambers and looks after the Dairy; Mr. Mudaliandan Chetty works in the Laundry; Miss Bell, Messrs. Raje and Srinivasa Iyer in the Private Secretary's Office; Mr. J. Srinivasa Rao in the Bhojanashāla; Miss Noble and Miss Palmer in the Mylapur Girls' School; Messrs. Telang, Shiva Rao, Shriram and S. Natesan in the *New India* Office; and Mr. Zuürman in the Power House.

The *Library* sends in a good report, and announces a fifth volume of its Upanishat series—15 Shaiva Upanishats—as in the Press. It has been delayed by the much-to-be-regretted failing eyesight of the Director, due to cataract, but after a successful operation, the eyesight is now improving, and aided by glasses, he hopes soon to resume his work. All our sympathy is with him in this painful trial. The Buḍḍhist Pāli-Sinhalese MSS. are noted as probably unique. Mr. F. L. Woodward has just completed an edition of the Commentary on the *Udāna*, to be published by the Buḍḍhist Text Society, and he has published at the Oxford University Press a translation of the *Samyuṭṭa Nikâya* for the Pāli Text Society. *Sayings of the Buḍḍha* is about to be published and other works are in hand. 144 MSS. have been given, bought, or copied—the last when originals were unprocurable and the works very rare.

The *T. P. H.* is, under Mr. S. Raja Ram's care and devotion, beginning to revive from its long depression. It has added five more valuable little books to its Asian Library, Vols. VII, VIII, IX, X and XI. The Vice-President has published *Early Teachings of the Masters*, answers to some of the questions of Messrs. Sinnett and Hume; *The Reign of Law*; Eight *Buḍḍhist Lectures; First Principles of Theosophy*, a most valuable book; *1 Promise*: Talks to Young Disciples. Also it has reprinted Bishop Leadbeater's *Hidden Side of Things*, and a third edition of Bhagavan Das' valuable *Science of the Emotions*, revised and much enlarged.

Dr. Cousins is responsible for the growing and most useful work of the *Brahmavidyāshrama;* it was his conception, and his enthusiasm has carried it through: it adds a most useful element to Headquarters.

He has done another marked service to the Society by adding to its Theosophical presentments of the Divine Wisdom, the Creative Activity of Īshvara, manifesting as Beauty; his lectures have aroused so much interest that his services have been requisitioned by the Calcutta and Mysore Universities. Mrs. Adair has aided much in this by the Art Exhibitions they have co-operated in organising with our T.S. Conventions at Adyar and Benares, and now this year in Bombay.

Mrs. Cousins has her own line of Art—Music—and she is much sought in high class amateur concerts for her brilliant playing. Another line of work started by her—Adyar residents being now regarded as pioneers in Service among Indian women and children—has been a

most successful *Women's Home of Service and Baby Welcome*, which is doing much useful work among the poor mothers and their babies in the *cheris*, and is also teaching home industries to middle class girls and women, so that they may add to their small incomes. The latest work is the setting on foot of the first *Children's Court* in India, a step rendered possible by the coming of a lady well trained in such work to Adyar as resident, Mrs. Stanford, who is one of the three Hon. Presidency Magistrates appointed specially for this work, a second being Lady Sadasivier, known in all good work for women and children in Madras, the wife of the just-elected General Secretary of the T.S. in India, and his comrade in all his work as T.S lecturer.

Another of the activities centred in Adyar is that remarkable little company, known as the *Brothers of Service*, without whom our educational work could not be carried on. They set a delightful example of willing, joyous service, which is an inspiration to all of us.

Miss Barrie, who came to us some years ago to teach the Montessori method in our schools, and who later, with my full approval, accepted the offer of the Government of Madras to take up work under it, and is now the head of the Training College for Women Teachers, started last May a *Village Improvement Society* for the little hamlets close to Headquarters, in connection with her Montessori School at Adyar. A large shed has been opened for spinning, weaving, carpentry, to train the children to use their hands as well as their heads, and some of the village women have also learnt to earn a little by spinning. Mme. Manziarly is very active in this, and has learnt from one of the rare Indian experts in the use of vegetable dyes, a perishing art, its practical methods and is introducing that to complete the old village industry. Thus are we trying to carry out the injunction of one high in the Hierarchy, given through H. P. B., "Theosophy must be made practical," for Theosophy is Their chosen instrument for the redemption of India from bondage, for the revival of her religions, her intellectual greatness and her material prosperity, and for winning back for her her place among the Nations of the world.

Subsidiary Activities

Our Subsidiary Activities carry on their most useful and necessary work. Some of these, carried on by residents in Headquarters,

I have noted under "Headquarters Activities," as it is well that members should realise how great a centre of the Masters' all-embracing work for human evolution Adyar is becoming. But these that are classed as subsidiary are so named because their work is largely carried on outside Madras by members not residing in Headquarters, and also they admit non-members. Foremost in importance is the *Order of the Star in the East*, energised to a wonderful extent by its Head, our Bro. Krishnaji. We have not as many reports from the Order as we should like, but those we have received are very good. The event of the Star year was the wonderful Congress at Arnhem (Holland) and its sequel, the Camp at Ommen. The gift of the castle and lands at Ommen have rendered an International Headquarters possible. *The Herald of the Star* has become a power, largely due to the remarkable editorial notes of the Head, some of which have been republished under the title of *The Path*. Brazil sends in a report, and asks for help and guidance, as the movement there is lethargic. Two monthly magazines, *Avaṭār* in Hindi and *Brothers of the Star* in English are issued by the Star Office at Adyar. Mr. Varma is managing the office.

The *Theosophical Educational Trust* flourishes exceedingly, both in India and Britain, and sends most interesting reports. The Indian one remarks that "our ideals and practice are more and more being adopted by other institutions". That is very well. It is what I call "Theosophising Education," and that is exactly why we carry on a few Schools and Colleges. In Adyar, in Guindy Road (Madras), in Madanapalle and in Benares, our educational work has been going on admirably during the year, and is likely to expand largely in the near future. In Guindy, Mr. Subba Rao has built up a fine institution, and is helped by Adyar residents, Miss Herington, Messrs. Yadunandan Prasad and Mr. Rama Rao. The Benares Boys' High School and the Girls' College and School do extraordinarily well in their examinations; all the girls sent up to the Matric. and Intermediate passed; at the first Messrs. Damodar Prasad, Kanitkar, Anandamurti, Brijoilas and Dr. Phansalkar, and in the second Padmabai Amma, Sitabai Amma, Miss Amery and Miss Orr work admirably. The Girls' School at Mylapur, near Adyar, with Miss Noble and Miss Palmer, has become a High School. I should add that all our schools are strong in Boy Scouts or Girl Guides. For the power to keep these up, I have to

thank our Public Purposes Fund, though it has not been as large as in its first year, and I have had to make two large loans, which much strain my now scanty resources.

I would urge upon each of you, who talk about the service of the Masters, what are you doing to prove your earnestness? What real sacrifice do you make to render possible the Coming of the Lord by preparing his way? Two years ago the Lodges, 104 of them, sent a monthly contribution to the Public Purposes Fund, which, aided by two or three donations carried on the work well. The second year less was sent, and I had to make a loan out of money sent to me to use in any way in which it was wanted, and at the end of next month there will be a deficit as well. Yet our educational work is specially stressed by the Lord Himself. I trust our 363 Lodges will remember how vitally necessary this work is for the future of India, and how the Theosophical plan of education, embracing the whole nature of the student, and developing him physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually, is one of the chief methods which is needed for that Future. It is the surest method of bringing about Hindū-Muslim Unity, for Hindū and Muslim students learning together, playing together, and led to reverence each other's religion as they join in a common daily act of worship to the One God, in which prayers from all faiths are used, results in an attitude which cannot be lost in later life, but sweetens the whole character, and broadens it unconsciously, while deepening the individual faith. Think of your monthly gifts to this work as offerings made directly to the Masters, one of whom described Theosophy as the corner-stone of the religions of the future, not as supplanting any one of them, but as holding them together in Unity. Our Theosophical Schools and Colleges are the only ones which give religious and moral teaching to the student according to the faith of the parents, and link them all in the recognition of a single Object of worship. We have few Schools and Colleges, for the Society in India has few wealthy members, and those few do not show the same generosity as do the poor.

And here let me express the gratitude I feel for the support given by our American Brethren, who are sending over an increasing sum regularly to help our work, especially the educational part of it. This year, thanks to Brother Krishnaji's efforts, some large sums have been put into a London Bank, to be released when we

are sure of larger help from India. A great project is in front of us, no less than a regularly chartered Theosophical University, wherein the successful line followed by our Schools and Colleges, and universally praised for its results on education and character by Government Inspectors, will be more thoroughly and completely carried out. Only then shall we, by a striking practical example, succeed in Theosophising the system of Education.

The *Theosophical Educational Trust in Great Britain and Ireland* sends a long report of excellent work at Letchworth. Dr. Arundale much approves the Guilds, which "represent the conviction of the authorities that every S. Christopher boy and girl must be trained to become a good citizen, apart from all else". That is what is needed, and is the aim of all the Schools and Colleges of the Trust. It is, in fact, the essential of all education, yet is sadly neglected everywhere, and in India, where it is most lamentably necessary, it is ignored. The S. Christopher Co-operative Guilds are an interesting industrial experiment, and have covered their expenses during the first year. The whole report is most interesting and inspiring.

The Round Table flourishes in America. The report from England really embraces Europe, and gives a most interesting account of the various Tables. When I was in Hamburg last summer, I was much struck with the beauty and devotion of a Round Table I attended. It is a touching tribute to the Chief Knight, the Founder of the Order, Knight Lancelot, that a seat in the Amphitheatre at Balmoral has been bought for the Order in his name.

Spain sends a report of *The Golden Chain.*

The *Musæus School and College* at Colombo continues to flourish and its Training College has achieved a unique success. It sent up 99 students to the Government Examination, and every one of them passed. Mrs. Higgins, the Director of the whole Institution, has indeed a right to feel pleasure in the splendid service she has rendered to the Education of Buddhist Girls and Women.

The *Olcott Pañchama Schools* enter on a new phase. Madras is one of the seven Provinces in which the Indian Minister of Education passed a Free and Compulsory Education Act. The Corporation of Madras becomes responsible for Primary Education therein, and the Trustees have handed over the three schools within Municipal limits to the proper authority. Their names will be

retained. The other two schools, outside the limits, remain in the hands of the Trustess, and if friends will make the same donations as heretofore, we shall be able to raise the teachers' salaries to the Municipal level, and thus make easier the lives of a most deserving set of persons. The new Superintendent, tho son of our Library Director, is doing excellent work.

The Theosophical Order of Service is becoming world-famous, thanks to the priceless services of its remarkable International Secretary, Arthur Burgess. No praise could be too strong for his work and he is nobly served by his comrade Thomson. It is truly a World Social Service Movement.

The Women's Indian Association is one of the remarkable institutions which have taken birth by the energies of the Fellows of the Theosophical Society. It has 51 Branches and 18 Centres, with a membership of 2,700, and it has been at the back of the great political movement of Women in India. The vote has been gained in three Provinces of India and in Burma, and given to women in Mysore, an Indian State. Two of its members have become the first women admitted to the Indian Bar. Six have been appointed to Municipal Councils. Three are Hon. Bench Magistrates. Two of the three Presidency Magistrates just appointed for the first Children's Court in Madras belong to it. The Hon. Secretary is a member of the National Convention as its representative, and has just taken part in the drafting of a Commonwealth of India Bill. The Association has warmly engaged in Social Service, and has shared much of the responsibility of the National Baby Week in different places. The Women's Home of Service in Madras is one of its beneficent institutions. There were 20,000 attendances of infants and children at its Baby Welcome; 150 pupils were taught handicrafts at its training School. Classes in Samskṛt and English were held. No record has reached me as to its work in connexion with women doctors, though the T.S. has escorted several to Europe and America through its sea-port members.

Conclusion

Let me, in conclusion, acknowledge inadequately—for I find no fitting words of thanks—the extraordinary love and kindness lavished on me during my visit to Europe last summer. Nothing I have done

deserved the welcome I received; it was due to the loving hearts met in each country I visited—England, Wales, Scotland, France, Holland, Germany. The love I keep in my heart as a priceless memory, to be an added inspiration to better work, to less imperfect service.

Brethren, do you recognise the Joy of Service, when it is rendered as a humble aid on earth to that Will which makes for Righteousness and Bliss, that is served so perfectly by our Elder Brothers? We speak of it as a "Service which is perfect Freedom". It is far more. It is a Service which is Joy so profound that it is uttermost Serenity; a Service which is fed by an ever-upwelling fountain of intarissable strength; a Service which accepts every frustration, every set-back, knowing each as a seed of a vaster good, that acknowledges no failure, no defeat, because victory is ever with Īshvara, the Ruler, and a fragment of His Being is the Hidden God in man, the Inner Ruler Immortal. O my Brethren! if in the silence of the mind and the calm of the emotions, you had ever caught one glimpse of the Glory, of the Majesty, of that Supreme, you would not need my feeble words; for you would hear the Voice of the Silence, the Silence which speaks more eloquently than any sounds which are known to mortal ears, the Silence, because the REAL is ever inexpressible.

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